

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently amended) A method for distributed computing in a data processing system located in a vehicle, the method comprising:

monitoring for a condition in the vehicle data processing system in which processing resources can be safely used for processing an externally received work unit;

responsive to detecting the condition, initiating processing of the work unit to generate a result; and

transmitting the result to a target data system in a remote location, wherein the data processing system located in the vehicle is primarily functional for performing vehicle operating tasks, and wherein the externally received work unit is for a process unrelated to the vehicle operating tasks.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the condition is a time when the vehicle is parked.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the condition is a time when the processing resources are not being used.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2 further comprising:
monitoring a battery power level in the vehicle.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the result is transmitted using a wireless communications link.

6. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2, wherein the vehicle is parked if an engine within the vehicle is stopped.

7. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the processing resources are provided by a first processor in the data processing system located in the vehicle and

wherein the monitoring step, the initiating step, and the transmitting step are performed by a second processor in the data processing system located in the vehicle.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the monitoring step includes determining whether a key is present in an ignition for the vehicle.

9. (Currently amended) A method for processing an externally received work unit in a vehicle data processing system located in a vehicle, the method comprising:

monitoring the vehicle to determine when processing resources can be safely used for processing the work unit; and

responsive to detecting a time in which processing resources can be safely used for processing the work unit, allocating processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to process the work unit, wherein the work unit is one of a plurality of work units distributed to a plurality of vehicles in a distributed vehicle processing environment.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising:

returning a result generated from processing of the work unit to a requestor.

11. (Original) The method of claim 9 further comprising:

initiating the allocating step only if a sufficient battery power level is present within the vehicle.

12. (Currently amended) A vehicle data processing system comprising:

a bus system;

a communications unit connected to the bus system;

a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes a set of instructions; and

a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to monitor for a condition in the vehicle data processing system in which processing resources can be safely used for processing an externally

received work unit; initiate processing of the work unit to generate a result in response to detecting the condition; and transmit the result to a target data system in a remote location, wherein the vehicle data processing system is primarily functional for performing vehicle operating tasks, and wherein the externally received work unit is for a process unrelated to the vehicle operating tasks.

13. (Currently amended) A vehicle data processing system comprising:
- a bus system;
 - a communications unit connected to the bus system;
 - a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the memory includes as a set of instructions; and
 - a processing unit connected to the bus system, wherein the processing unit executes the set of instructions to monitor the vehicle to determine when the vehicle is parked; and allocate processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to process an externally received work unit in response to identifying a time in which the vehicle is parked, wherein the work unit is one of a plurality of work units distributed to a plurality of vehicles in a distributed vehicle processing environment.

14. (Currently amended) A data processing system for distributed computing in a data processing system located in a vehicle, the data processing system comprising:
- monitoring means for monitoring for a condition in the vehicle data processing system in which processing resources can be safely used for processing an externally received work unit;
 - initiating means, responsive to detecting the condition, for initiating processing of the work unit to generate a result; and
 - transmitting means for transmitting the result to a target data system in a remote location, wherein the data processing system located in the vehicle is primarily functional for performing vehicle operating tasks, and wherein the externally received work unit is for a process unrelated to the vehicle operating tasks.

15. (Original) The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the condition is a time when the vehicle is parked.
16. (Original) The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the condition is a time when the processing resources are not being used.
17. (Original) The data processing system of claim 15, wherein the monitoring means is a first monitoring means and further comprising:
second monitoring means for monitoring a battery power level in the vehicle.
18. (Original) The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the result is transmitted using a wireless communications link.
19. (Original) The data processing system of claim 16, wherein the vehicle is parked if the engine is stopped.
20. (Previously presented) The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the processing resources are provided by a first processor in the data processing system located in the vehicle and wherein the monitoring means, the initiating means, and the transmitting means are performed by a second processor in the data processing system located in the vehicle.
21. (Original) The data processing system of claim 14, wherein the monitoring means includes determining whether a key is present in an ignition for the vehicle.
22. (Currently amended) A data processing system for processing an externally received work unit in a vehicle data processing system located in a vehicle, the data processing system comprising:
monitoring means for monitoring the vehicle to determine when the vehicle is parked; and

allocating means, responsive to identify a time in which the vehicle is parked, for allocating processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to process the work unit, wherein the work unit is one of a plurality of work units distributed to a plurality of vehicles in a distributed vehicle processing environment.

23. (Original) The data processing system of claim 22 further comprising:
returning means for returning a result generated from processing of the work unit to a requestor.

24. (Original) The data processing system of claim 22 further comprising:
initiating means for initiating the allocating step only if a sufficient battery power level is present within the vehicle.

25. (Currently amended) A computer program product in a computer readable medium for distributed computing in a data processing system located in a vehicle, the computer program product comprising:

first instructions for monitoring for a condition in the vehicle data processing system in which processing resources can be safely used for processing an externally received work unit;

second instructions, responsive to detecting the condition, for initiating processing of the work unit to generate a result; and

third instructions for transmitting the result to a target data system in a remote location, wherein the data processing system located in the vehicle is primarily functional for performing vehicle operating tasks, and wherein the externally received work unit is for a process unrelated to the vehicle operating tasks.

26. (Original) The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the condition is a time when the vehicle is parked.

27. (Original) The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the condition is a time when the processing resources are not being used.

28. (Original) The computer program product of claim 26 further comprising:
fourth instructions for monitoring a battery power level in the vehicle.
29. (Original) The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the result is
transmitted using a wireless communications link.
30. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 27, wherein the
vehicle is parked if an engine within the vehicle is stopped.
31. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 25, wherein the
processing resources are provided by a first processor in the data processing system
located in the vehicle and wherein the monitoring step, the initiating step, and the
transmitting step are performed by a second processor in the data processing system
located in the vehicle.
32. (Currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer program product of claim 25,
wherein the first instructions includes determining whether a key is present in an ignition
for the vehicle.
33. (Currently amended) A computer program product in a computer readable
medium for processing a work unit in a vehicle data processing system located in a
vehicle, the computer program product comprising:
first instructions for monitoring the vehicle to determine when the vehicle is
parked; and
second instructions, responsive to identify a time in which the vehicle is parked,
for allocating processor resources within the vehicle data processing system to process
the work unit, wherein the work unit is one of a plurality of work units distributed to a
plurality of vehicles in a distributed vehicle processing environment.

34. (Original) The computer program product of claim 33 further comprising:
third instructions for returning a result generated from processing of the work unit
to a requestor.
35. (Original) The computer program product of claim 33 further comprising:
third instructions for initiating the allocating step only if a sufficient battery power
level is present within the vehicle.